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VACAVALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE , CALIFORNIA

October 2013

The Feedline

I thought that I should share this bit of information with the club members especially to those members who have a license, but haven't put up an antenna yet because of perhaps where they live (an HOA environment or a restrictive location) or perhaps the member isn't exactly flush with cash these days given the present economy. I myself do not live in a HOA community or a restrictive environment and me being flush with extra cash is a fantasy I live for every day! I originally bought a MFJ-1778 wire antenna which is nothing more than a simple G5RV antenna consisting of two (2) 14 ga. stranded wires on each side of about 51 ft. and a 32 ft. 450 ohm ladder line that connects at the apex (center) of the dipole antenna to feed each leg and terminates at a fiberglass board having a SO-239 connection.

I have inline just prior to the SO-239 connection a MFJ-915 balun which serves two purposes one of which is to prevent any stray RF from getting back inside my QTH and "lighting up my life" somewhat and the other purpose is provide a match from the 50 ohm coax cable to the 450 ohm ladder line connection. The coax I use is very flexible which is nothing more than RG-8 mini coax cable with PL-259 connectors. The G5RV is up in the air at about 40 feet using a metal tripod mounted to my QTH's roof with two sections of 1-1/4" EMT conduit purchased at Home Depot both of which are bolted together securely and for which the

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Hams are ready for any emergency

Meeting notes

The September meeting of the VVRC was called to order at 19:10 hr. by president Marcus Maclean – KI6WDX. In attendance were five board members and six members and visitors.

There was no financial report, and the minutes of the August meeting were posted in the newsletter.

To open, there was a very brief discussion regarding the Mt. Vaca Repeater fund.

Next, the subject of the feasibility of holding the board meeting on a night other than the club meeting night was once again brought up, and tabled for further discussion at another time.

Marcus wanted the membership to know that the VVRC was open to holding training for anyone who wanted / needed training.

Bob – K6HEW, gave a brief update on the Merriment on Main planning meeting. The event will be held on Tuesday, December 3. Once again this year, a security back ground check will be required of all participants; however, we're told that the Vacaville Police will pick up the cost for this. The issue of the B.G. forms and badge photos was still being worked and we'll all be updated as this progresses.

So far, the list of VVRC members committed to this fun event includes Bob, Mike Vieira – W6MAV, and Chris – KD7TQO, but we could use a lot more members to help make this a success, so think about it.

Once again, the question of the feasibility of putting together a club station for club operation, standardized training, and to allow the VVRC to take a station to an event such as Field Day, QRP, and have trained operators man the station. Bob said that the

Continued on Page 2

Feedline-from pg-1..Cont

combined mast is guyed with metal wire about 1/2 way up using a four (4) point guying method.

My choice of radio is a Yaesu FT-450 coupled to a LDG external 10:1 tuner (YT-450) and no amplifier (at least not yet!!) The other day in late July of this year, I received my QSL card from the QSO I did with the operator down in Cordoba, Argentina. I QSO'd with him back in early February 2013 using the 20 meter band and using only 20 watts of power to him. The other day, I finally got my sought after QSL card for the T2YY DXpedition out to the Tuvalu Island for a QSO I did with the station operators back in early March 2013 in which I QSO'd with them using the 17 and 15 meter bands using only 50 watts of power. I'm still waiting for my QSL cards from other operators I did a QSO with earlier this year using SSB voice to stations over in Europe, Japan, Russia and Africa.

The point to this article I submitted to our club's newsletter editor is this: If all I can afford is a dirt cheap G5RV antenna from MFJ ($45) and mount it up in the air at a reasonable height securely using readily available materials from likes of Home Depot, a metal tripod and using the reasonably priced RG-8 mini coax cable (JSC #3060 sold at AES) which by the way, it's selling price is very inexpensive, a good used Yaesu FT-450 and the LDG 10:1 tuner to get me on the air, then you should be able to do the same. Maybe later on when I'm flush with more cash will I look into buying and installing a beam antenna. But for the time being, this dirt cheap G5RV wire dipole is working very well and quite frankly, the original intent for the dirt cheap G5RV was to use it for events like Field Day and the NCCC CQP event since I

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still have an Alpha Delta DX-LB+ antenna in its bag because how I had planned on putting it up couldn't be done at the time!

And the G5RV also works very well for the HF digital modes I've been into lately!

Meeting notes from pg-1..Cont

Benicia ARC had successfully done just this, and said that we could probably invite their team to visit us and show us how to assemble a mobile or "fly-away" kit. The issue was tabled for further discussion.

Marcus said that after discussions with the Fire District, we will probably be using the Elmira Fire House for our meetings for the foreseeable future because there are just too many issues – financial and logistics – to overcome before repairs can be made to the Vine St. ramp.

For the evening's presentation, Marcus showed two ARRL videos: installing the PL-259 connector, and, operating "split".

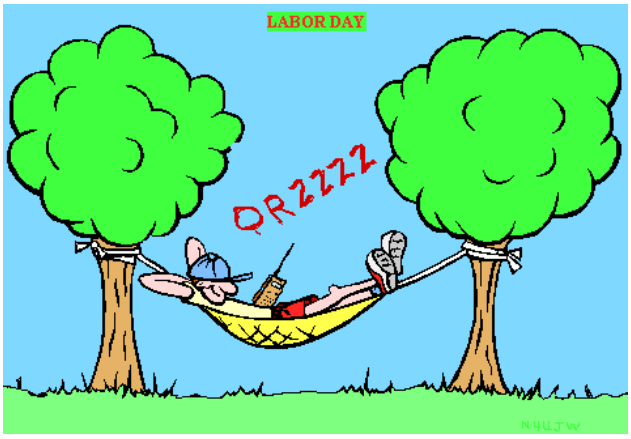
Prior to closing, Skip took a moment to remind the membership that our by-laws require that nominations for club officers are to be made at the October meeting, followed by the election in November, and the installation at the Christmas dinner. So, if you feel that you have what it takes to make a difference in the club, and would like to run for an office yourself, or, if you know of someone that you think would be great in one of the positions, please volunteer or nominate in October. However – if you plan to nominate another member, please be sure that you have discussed it with them ahead of time and have their permission to nominate them.

As we closed, Marcus announced that there would be a "live" demonstration of the PSK-31 digital system at the October meeting, so that should be pretty interesting. If you've never experimented with digi-com — plan on attending!

With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 20:30 hr.

Respectfully submitted,

Skip Lawson – AF6HC



VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB--2013

ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Marcus K. Maclean, KI6WDX
Vice President: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Secretary: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6GZB
Director: Arthur Miller, KI6UXE
Director: Richard Craig, KJ6MIB

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Club Activities Chairperson: Board of Directors
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Bowen, KJ6SCC
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

Lights out: House plan would protect nation's electricity from solar flare, nuclear bomb

Ref: BY: PAUL BEDARD JUNE 17, 2013

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Amid growing fears of a massive electromagnetic pulse hit from either a solar flare or a terrorist nuclear bomb, House Republicans on Tuesday will unveil a plan to save the nation's electric grid from an attack that could mean lights out for 300 million Americans.

Dubbed the Secure High-voltage Infrastructure for Electricity from Lethal Damage Act, the legislation would push the federal government to install grid-saving devices such as surge protectors to protect against an attack.

"It is critical that we protect our major transformers from cascading destruction. The Shield Act encourages industry to develop standards necessary to protect our electric infrastructure against both natural and man-made EMP events," said Rep. Trent Franks, the Arizona Republican who is offering up the bipartisan bill.

Electromagnetic pulse, or EMP, has come into focus because of fears the sun is pushing out unusually big solar flares that can disrupt the electric grid. Defense officials are also worried about a terrorist attack, possibly in the form of a small nuclear bomb exploded overhead.

"This is serious stuff," said former Pentagon official Frank Gaffney, who heads the Center for Security Policy. But, he added, there is a growing bipartisan consensus to protect the electric grid.

Any EMP attack could be damaging, said Gaffney. He cited a new Lloyds of London report that determined that the area from Washington, D.C., to New York could be without electricity for up to two years in a major solar flare-up.

The legislation will be introduced Tuesday by Franks and former House Speaker Newt Gingrich at a meeting of the House EMP Caucus. Officials said that the legislation, provided in advance to Secrets, will include information from a recent EMP commission report that "contemporary U.S. society is not structured, nor does it have the means, to provide for the needs of nearly 300 million Americans without electricity."

Gaffney told Secrets that there are some 300 huge electric transformers around the nation that control the grid and that have to be protected. "You are basically talking about surge protectors, of a somewhat exotic kind, but it is a means of interrupting the pulse," he said.

Paul Bedard, The Washington Examiner's "Washington Secrets" columnist, can be contacted at pbedard@washingtonexaminer.com

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Congratulations to new local Hams

KK6FZS, Vallejo; Robert A Flournoy, KK6FZU, Vallejo; Daniel D Ordonio,
KK6GHS, Vallejo; Jeffrey T Kern, KK6FZT, Vallejo; Daven B Rauchwerk,

Congratulations to new local Ham upgrades

: Alice L Snethen, KJ6YQN, Benicia;
David R Nicholson, KK6EZF, Benicia; KE6ADM, Vallejo.

Happy Hammin'

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Vaca Valley Radio Club has proudly served the Northern Solano County Area since 1988. We pride ourselves in providing a friendly place for radio amateurs to meet and improve their operating skills.

We participate in public service events throughout the year and are always ready to assist with communications during times of emergency.

Browsw our website for more information about our club. If you have any questions please e-mail us at w6vvr@w6vvr.net or call 707-448-5665 for assistance

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988. General Meetings: 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM 420 Elmira Fire Station.

Wheelchair accessible

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at: vacavalleyradio.net

Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3
The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 8pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.200(-)
WV6F 440.025(+)
WV6F 1291.900(-)

Technology: "Ambient Backscatter" Could Power Devices in the Future

University of Washington researchers believe we may be one step closer to an "Internet-of-things" reality. UW engineers have created a new wireless communication system that allows devices to interact with each other without relying on batteries or wires for power. Using something they call "ambient backscatter," these devices can interact with users and communicate with each other without using batteries.

They exchange information by reflecting or absorbing existing radio signals. Two devices communicate by reflecting the existing signals to exchange information. The researchers built small, battery-free devices with antennas that can detect, harness and reflect a television signal, which then is picked up by other similar devices. The technology could enable a network of devices and sensors to communicate with no power source or human attention needed.

"We can repurpose wireless signals that are already around us into both a source of power and a Communication medium," said lead researcher Shyam Gollakota, a UW assistant professor of computer science and engineering. "It's hopefully going to have applications in a number of areas including wearable computing, smart homes and self-sustaining sensor networks."

The researchers published their results at the Association for Computing Machinery's Special Interest Group on Data Communication August 2013 conference in Hong Kong. Their research received the conference's "Best Paper" award. "Our devices form a network out of thin air," said co-author Joshua Smith, a UW associate professor of computer science and engineering and of electrical engineering. "You can reflect these signals slightly to create a Morse code of communication between battery-free devices." The original article and video are on the UW website.

For more information, contact Gollakota and Smith at abc@cs.washington.edu.—
The University of Washington

NET CONTROL OPERATORS
1st week of month-Jerry Bowen; KJ6SCC
2nd week of month-Richard Craig; KJ6MIB
3rd week of month-Chris Jones; KD7TQO
4th week of month-Marcus MacLean; KI6WDX
On months with 5 weeks-Bob Hewitt; K6HEW

THE BIT BUCKET

Amateur Radio Provided Critical Communications in Colorado Flooding

Ref:ARLB021

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) volunteers respnded in and around flood-stricken counties of Colorado, providing critical communication for Red Cross shelters and state and local emergency operation centers during recent heavy rains Jack Ciaccia, WM0G, says that with power cut off to affected communities and many cell telephone towers along the Big Thompson River toppled by the flooding, ham radio is providing medical and health-and-welfare traffic between evacuation centers and the EOCs.

Boulder County deployed miniature drone aircraft carrying Amateur TV (ATV) cameras to survey the affected, more remote regions to spot individuals who may need to be rescued

The drones - a fixed-wing aircraft and a hybrid gas/electric-powered helicopter - have been transmitting ATV video via UHF to the ground and simultaneously recording the video on a memory stick. The helicopter can remain in the air for more than 5 hours at a clip, recording images for officials at the EOC to evaluate.

As the disaster response changed from rescue to recovery mode, Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) volunteers in flood-stricken communities in Colorado shifted to damage assessment duty. Boulder County ARES (BCARES) planned to shoot video of the devastation as teams move into the field — a job Boulder County ARES Assistant emergency Coordinator George Weber, KAØBSA, said was "something new" for his team.

Damage assessment follows on the heels of an extended activation to help rescue, evacuate, and shelter flood victims.

How long has The American Legion advocated the use of ham radio in disaster preparedness?

Since the 1930s. In 1939, three American Legion posts just northwest of San Francisco – in San Anselmo, Ross and Mill Valley, all just a few miles from one another – held a three-way meeting via short-wave radio. The American Legion Magazine described it as "not a stunt, but a practical demonstration of emergency

communication held in conjunction with the Major Disaster Communications Committee." At about the same time, a Legion pamphlet called "In Time of Disaster" was circulating.

Today's version is called "Disaster Preparedness and Response for American Legion Posts." Download it from the Legion's Publications page **here** for September, National Disaster Preparedness Month. And find out more about the Legion's resurgent ham radio program and Amateur Radio Club **here**.

Cheap & Simple Guy Wire Fixture For Vertical Antennas

Jerry Bowen, KJ6SCC

During the installation of my 4-BandTrap vertical antenna, I needed a fixture to attach the guy wires to.

I didn't want to spend a few dollars and shipping charges for a manufactured piece so I made one in ten minutes for about 50 cents.

I bought a 3/4 inch PVC coupling that fit snugly on the antenna at the point where I intended to attach the guy wires and with a few modifications it was ready.

Saw two slots 90 degrees apart across the PVC fitting to start. Heat up the fixture with a common heat gun. The PVC will quickly soften enough to spread the four sections to about a 45 degree angle and let cool.

Then drill a hole of the approriate size for your guy wires in each of the four sections.

Saw another slot across the modified fixture about halfway down above the holes and you are done.

Mount on the antenna with a pipe clamp to asure that the fixture won't slip.

Test Before You Setup

Jerry Olive, KD6WKY

A very important step in getting ready for the California QSO Party is to check all of your equipment in advance of the contest to make sure it works properly. There is nothing worse than finding out in the field that you either forgot something or what you thought would work does not work.

Over the past 15 years or so I have acquired everything necessary to operate a portable amateur radio station; I have everything. For several years I used to operate with Ralph Jones AA6GM formerly KA6FDI in the County Expedition category. We operated from a butte in Riverside County, the foothills in Santa Barbara County, and in Yolo County. With this experience I have really figured out what works and what just takes up valuable time that doesn't work. The key is to think "portable."

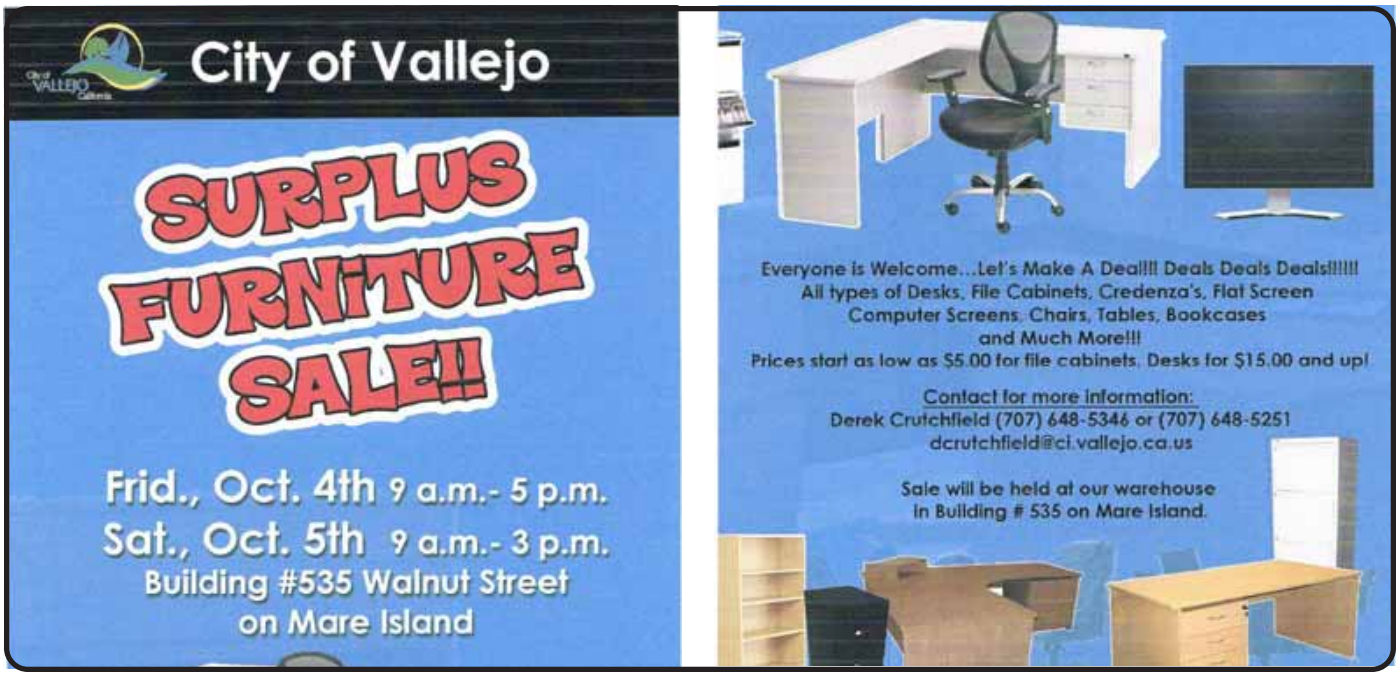
For a few years I made the mistake of thinking I should use antennas and equipment designed for permanent installation amateur radio stations. I used to dismantle my home station and reset it up in the field. That took lots of time and really didn't make must difference in the contest scores. Now I keep a second radio for field use, and have portable antennas designed for field use that can be set up by one or two people easily.

With that in mind Skip AF6HC and I set up the Superantenna™ YP-3 three element beam over in the park behind his QTH to make sure we understood the antenna and to understand the instructions. It took us two hours with a few mistakes and corrections to set it up and test it with an antenna analyzer. It tested out just fine.

I have a short list of items to do to make the antenna a little more operational friendly and more secure in its erected design. We really took our time to get it right.

If you plan to do any kind of work with radios and antennas either at home or while camping I encourage you to test your equipment out before you need it to make sure it works properly when the time comes. You'll learn about the equipment and mentally revisit many of the things you learned in your licensing studies.

Lastly I am still looking for aspiring contesters that want to operate a CQP station in Yolo County. I do not need any equipment, only operators that want to work a Kenwood radio and log the contacts. If you are interested please contact me at KD6WKY@arrl.net


City of Vallejo
SURPLUS FURNITURE SALE!!
Frid., Oct. 4th 9 a.m.- 5 p.m.
Sat., Oct. 5th 9 a.m.- 3 p.m.
Building #535 Walnut Street
on Mare Island
Everyone is Welcome...Let's Make A Deal!!! Deals Deals Deals!!!!!!
All types of Desks, File Cabinets, Credenza's, Flat Screen
Computer Screens, Chairs, Tables, Bookcases
and Much More!!!
Prices start as low as $5.00 for file cabinets. Desks for $15.00 and up!
Contact for more information:
Derek Crutchfield (707) 648-5346 or (707) 648-5251
dcrutchfield@ci.vallejo.ca.us
Sale will be held at our warehouse
in Building # 535 on Mare Island.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACAVALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign_____

Street:
_____

City: _____Zip:
_____

Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)

License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)

E-Mail
Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues	$20.00	_____
Each Family Member	$ 2.00	_____
Student	$ 5.00	_____
Repeater/Autopatch donation		_____
Call/Name badge	$11.00	_____

Optional ARRL membership

ARRL dues	$37.00	
Total		

Paid by CASH: Check #

DATE: _____

_____ _____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143